

REMARKS

This Response is in reply to the Final Office Action rejection mailed on April 25, 2007. Claims 1 – 5, 7 – 14, and 16 – 33 are pending in the application. Claims 1 – 5, 7 – 10, 12, 13, and 24 – 33 are rejected. Claim 11 is objected to. Claims 14 and 16 – 18 are allowed.

Claims 1, 2, 7 – 10, 12, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,148,172 in view of U.S. Patent 5,932,313 and U.S. Patent 5,327,207. Claim 1 has been amended to now include the allowable subject matter of claim 11. Therefore, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2, 7 – 10, 12, and 13 are not obvious over the combination of Kanda, Barton, and Otake. Claim 11 has been canceled.

Claims 3 – 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kanda in view of Barton and Otake, and in further view of U.S. Patent 5,758,249. These claims are not obvious for at least the reasons discussed above for independent claim 1 from which they depend.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicants' submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If any issues remain unresolved, the Applicant's attorney requests a telephone interview to expedite allowance and issuance.

Respectfully submitted,

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